



Tucson Parks and Recreation Commission
December 2, 2009
Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Tucson Parks and Recreation Commission took place on Wednesday, December 2, 2009. The meeting was held at the Parks and Recreation, Mesquite Room, 900 S. Randolph Way, Tucson, Arizona.

1. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order with a quorum at 3:35 p.m. The following individuals were in attendance:

- **Commission Members Present:** Chairman Steve Anderson, Ward 4; Jonathan Rothschild, Mayor's Office; Kristin Almquist, Ward 1, Elayne Feder, Ward 2; Deborah Tosline, Ward 3; (Ward 5 appointment is vacant).
- **Commission Member Excused:** Bob Kovitz, Ward 6
- **Staff Members Present:** Fred Gray, Director; John Sefton, Deputy Director, Administration; Jim Conroy, East District Administrator; Susan Basford, Zoo and Reid Park Administrator; Peg Weber, Northwest District Administrator; Reenie Ochoa, Southwest District Administrator; Jane Duarte, Capital Program Manager; and Irma Adams, Recording Secretary.
- **Others in Attendance:** none

2. Approval of Minutes of October 28, 2009

Motion (Almquist/Feder) to approve the minutes of October 28, 2009. Motion passed unanimously by a voice vote (5-0).

3. Call to the Audience

Reenie Ochoa introduced a group of Lynn-Urquides KIDCO students. The children invited the Commissioners to a Presentation of the "Wizard of Oz" on December 9, 2009 at 6:30 p.m.

4. Commission Subcommittee Reports

a. Awards Program

Peg Weber stated that a subcommittee had met and reviewed the Award Nominations. Winners will be announced and awarded at a Mayor and Council meeting in January, 2010.

b. Commission Strategic Services Plan (standing item)

Mr. Gray stated the Commission revised the Plan at their May 27, 2009 meeting and it was resent for their perusal.

c. Community Advocacy Group/Pima Parks Alliance

Mr. Rothschild stated the Group was continuing to work with the neighborhood associations for Balboa Park and Toumey Park.

d. Foundation Liaison and Assistance

Chairperson Anderson stated he had not taken any action on the item.

5. Commission Visibility and Marketing PowerPoint

Ms. Tosline stated that at last summer's planning meeting, the Commission discussed preparing a presentation for the Council Member Offices. Ms. Tosline continued by stating she had reviewed the Parks and Recreation 2006 Sustainability PowerPoint and felt that most of the information was unusable by the Commission.

Mr. Gray stated that the PowerPoint was developed in 2006 for Mayor and Council discussion about Financial Sustainability. At that time, the Mayor and Council was considering a financial sustainability plan and City departments were asked to identify needs, maintenance and operations for catch up and keep up timeframes. Parks and Recreation was included in sustainability funding which was based on a projected revenue growth of \$25 million per year. The purpose of the sustainability money was to secure funds for operational needs. As you are aware, the last couple of years the revenue growth has been non-existent. The first two years money was focused on comfort stations and irrigation needs. During the third year of the Plan, the Department did not spend all of its sustainability money. Mr. Gray continued by stating that during discussion of their Strategic Plan, the Commission had discussed the need for a marketing campaign in order to visit the Ward Council offices. The purpose of the PowerPoint presentation was to provide a starting place for the Commission to direct their efforts. The premise was to provide the Commission visibility in the community and Ward Offices.

Ms. Tosline stated the Commission may want to take a different direction in discussing future maintenance needs. What message does the Commission want to convey to the public in supporting Parks and Recreation?

Ms. Almquist stated that at the community dialogues many of the neighborhood associations voiced that they were willing to adopt a park and/or bathroom. Ms. Almquist continued by stating that the Commission might consider that in their plan.

Mr. Gray stated the Plan emphasized the need for operational support along with capital improvement program annually. Operational support is a necessity along with the funds for building facilities.

Mr. Rothschild asked what the status of the Bond issue was.

Mr. Gray stated that the Bond Committee's final meeting was scheduled for December 18, 2009. The Bond Committee is currently working on its final recommendations which will then be presented to the Board of Supervisors. The final recommendations package will then be presented to the Board of Supervisors for a vote in April or May. Currently, there are two versions of the recommendations. The Parks Advisory Subcommittee's recommendation is \$75 to \$95 million for City parks projects. The Bond Committee asked the County Administrator to put together a recommendation based on the debt service capacity. The County Administrator's recommendation is about \$25 million based on a \$600 million bond package knowing that the bonding capacity could be as high as \$800 million. Mr. Huckelberry stated the \$600 million recommendation was conservative. The other jurisdictions have not been involved as yet either.

Mr. Rothschild felt the Commission's focus should be on the Bond issue. There will not be any money if this bond package does not pass.

Ms. Tosline suggested the Commission create a short presentation. Ms. Tosline recommended providing background information, current status, list what the needs are, and how the needs could be met with the future Bond money.

Mr. Rothschild asked if Ms. Tosline wished to work on the presentation should she contact Richard Symchak?

Mr. Gray stated that Mr. Symchak would assist in formatting the PowerPoint and other staff regarding content.

6. Sustainability Practices

Jane Duarte stated that the Department is continuing to incorporate sustainability practices in its projects. The 2008-2010 Sustainability Report was distributed to the Commissioners.

Ms. Tosline asked if the report was available online and if not requested that it be.

Ms. Duarte replied the report would be posted.

Ms. Tosline commented that the Golf Course Superintendents Magazine had an interesting article in August 2009 regarding the greening of golf courses and how courses are becoming environmental friendly. The article stated golf course management had saved lots of money by changing their practices. One golf course saved \$28,000 on the purchase of chemicals and over three years saved \$170,000. Another course's annual maintenance went from \$21,000 to \$15,000 by incorporating sustainable practices. The Envira-Logic Resources developed environmental guidelines and best management practices. The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America is conducting surveys to determine where golf courses are at as far as becoming greener and sustainable. Ms. Tosline commented that there is an Audubon International Coop Sanctuary Program whereby a golf course may get certified as a wildlife sanctuary. However, you must know your carbon footprint first.

Mike Hayes stated that Tucson City Golf has worked with Dr. David Kopec from the University of Arizona for the past seven years. Dr. Kopec has developed new turf and grasses and is using El Rio and Fred Enke Golf Courses as testing sites. Water levels and amount of chemicals used are being studied. Golf staff researched the Audubon Program and discovered that Fred Enke is the only City golf course that would be eligible for the Program. In order to become part of the program, a fulltime employee would have to be hired to oversee the program which entails tagging the animals and plants, etc. At this time, Tucson City Golf does not have the funds to hire such an employee. Mr. Hayes stated he would invite Brent Newcomb, Golf Administrator to the next meeting to discuss what TCG is doing as far as maintenance practices.

7. Budget Report

Mr. Gray stated that the budget report shows the Department's overall General Fund, Parks and Golf expenditures are at 33% for the fiscal year. Many of our summer expenditures for golf and pools appear in the first quarter report. Golf is at 36% expenditures. Mr. Gray continued by stating that

the City is facing a \$32 million deficit for the current fiscal year and staff has been challenged to closed that gap.

Mr. Rothschild asked how Proposition 400 affected the budget.

Mr. Gray stated that expenditure limitation was established by the State. Since revenues are so short this fiscal year, the budge is not affected much. Bond indebtedness is not subject to the expenditure limitation. However, the General Fund and Impact Fees are subject to that limit. If impact fees are collected, expenditure of those funds may be delayed. Parks and Recreation is contributing to the deficit by not filling its 20 vacant positions which equals about one million dollars.

8. Staff Reports

a. Capital Projects Report

Jane Duarte stated that some of the highlights were: Purple Heart little league field; Oury Park basketball court and cover; Rio Vista Natural Resource Park construction is underway. Arroyo Chico Linear Park, the Reid Park segment, construction begins on December 7, 2009. Silverlake Park parking lot project begins on December 7. Completed projects: James Thomas Park sculpture and lighting; McCormick Park Par Course. Stimulus funding was received in the amount of \$1.7 million for the expansion Cherry Avenue Center. Parks and Recreation is working with the Department of Transportation's extension of Kolb Road Connection to Sabino Canyon improvements on the west side of Udall Park.

b. Southwest District Report

Ms. Ochoa gave a brief overview on some district highlights. Ms. Ochoa stated that the seniors were busy with activities. El Pueblo seniors were awarded a sponsorship grant in the amount of \$2,000 by Care Group to hold a winter formal. Civic Events just completed another busy season. The ACT Music Program is assisting in producing the Wizard of Oz. Southwest District will be taking over maintenance of the Parque de Santa Cruz, both sides of the Santa Cruz River, from Valencia to Irvington.

c. East District Report

Mr. Conroy gave a brief overview on some district highlights. The Purple Heart Little League field is being funded by impact fees. Mr. Conroy stated that Mr. Gray was able to free up \$30,000 for a perimeter path which pleased the residents. Construction of the Udall Park sports field project (funded by 2004 Bond money) is scheduled to begin shortly and completion expected to be in May or June, 2010. The Fort Lowell Master Plan was unanimously approved by Mayor and Council. Mr. Conroy stated he would continue to provide information to the Commission on the project. There is \$1.1 million available at this time for restoration work. The City will clean up the site with monies received from an EPA grant in the amount of \$250,000. Eventually the site will be a heritage park when completed in ten years.

d. Northwest District Report

Ms. Weber gave a brief overview on some district highlights. The Edith Ball Adaptive Aquatic Center just celebrated their fifth anniversary with an event. Attendance was small but those present gave testimonials about what the Center has meant to them. The Santa Rita Skate Park was formally named the Albert M. Gallego Skate Park. The holiday tree has been lighted with LED lights at Jacome Plaza. San Cosme Park next to Fire Station One has been completed and is the first portion of the greenway.

e. Tucson City Golf Report

Mr. Hayes stated that the golf courses were struggling with the cold weather but are in excellent condition. Cart restrictions were lifted at Dell Urich and Silverbell. Mr. Hayes continued by stating that El Rio's grass appears green because the fairways were sprayed with iron (and a little dye). The iron helps keep the soil temperature warmer so the grass does not go dormant as fast. El Rio's fairways were not overseeded but the prices were lowered. Staff is awaiting the public's reaction to a brown golf course. The greens and tees were overseeded. The cart paths look great.

f. Zoo and Reid Park Operations Report

Ms. Basford stated that Zoo attendance was down due to the cold weather. The Zoo hosted two days of free admission during November which attracted 9,000 people each. Ms. Basford continued by stating that the Reid Zoo's Festival of Lights begins on December 3. The zoo has experienced out of town visitors to the Conservation Learning Center. The education director and engineer from Blank Park Zoo came to see the sustainable features. A group from the Field Museum in Chicago visited the CLC as inspiration for a new exhibit they are building.

g. Director's Report

- Update on Colorado Rockies/Hi Corbett Field (standing item)

Mr. Gray stated that the first meeting with the Colorado Rockies and the City was held on November 30, 2009. Mr. Gray stated that discussion was primarily about available options. The City hopes to have an amicable settlement.

Mr. Rothschild asked how much the Rockies would owe the City to break their contract.

Mr. Gray stated that they would owe the outstanding indebtedness on the stadium improvements. The amount is unknown at this time but was scheduled to be paid off in July 2011. The current outstanding debt is approximately \$2 million.

Mr. Rothschild asked why the Rockies believe they can leave. What kind of usage is planned for Hi Corbett after the Rockies leave.

Mr. Gray stated that the Rockies decision is based on the fact there are no longer three teams in town. Plans have not been made as to future usage of the stadium. The Rockies usually conduct an extended spring training in the fall and a fantasy camp in January. Depending on the date the Rockies actually vacate the premises, the amount of debt service will be determined at that point. Once negotiations are finalized, the City will work with the Pima County Sports and Tourism Authority to establish an RFP for use of the facility. Mr. Gray continued by stating the PCSTA did get legislation passed which will eventually result in a ballot question for Pima County residents. The ballot will levy various levels of taxes on the tourism industry such as hotels, restaurants, car rentals, theaters, etc. If approved, those taxes would generate \$15 to \$17 million per year and would allow bonding capacity for improvements at Hi Corbett and Tucson Electric Park and would provide for the building of a new stadium. PCSTA will be required to spend 10% but they would like to spend 25% of any funds generated for the improvement and construction of youth and amateur sports facilities.

Mr. Gray stated the Bond Committee continues to meet; their next meeting is scheduled for December 18 at the Manning House. Mr. Gray thanked the Commissioners for their attendance at

the Family Festival. Event attendance was approximately 9,000. Mr. Gray also thanked staff for their work on the special event. This year was a bit of a strain on staff due to the budget reductions.

9. Mayor and Council Agenda Items

• Future, Pending, and Adopted Agenda Items

Mr. Rothschild asked for an update on the KIDCO Evaluation Study.

Mr. Gray stated that Parks and Recreation had partnered with the U. of A. College of Education for the evaluation. The Department sent letters to parents and host sites that random surveys would be sent and it was optional for them to fill out and return. As of today, parents and children involved in the KIDCO Program have completed surveys. The host sites' surveys will be completed by the end of the week. The U. of A. will be presenting a report to the Department in January.

Mr. Rothschild asked if staff had an idea of the comments being received.

Mr. Sefton replied that all surveys were returned to the U. of A. The Department is not involved in the analysis in order to keep the study unbiased. Over 400 randomly sampled surveys were sent out.

Mr. Gray stated that once the U. of A. completes the study, a presentation will be made to the Out of School Program Task Force. A presentation will then be made to the TPRC and then go to Mayor and Council.

Mayor and Council Agenda items since the October 28, 2009 meeting

Master Plan	Presentation and discussion of the Historic Fort Lowell Park Master Plan. Presentation to be made by City cultural resources staff. Ward 2; Resolution 21431	November 9, 2009	Consent Item 7-B
Naming	Naming the Morris K. Udall Park Amphitheater the "Laszlo Veres Amphitheater"; Ward 2; resolution 21433	November 9, 2009	Consent Item 7-C
Naming	Naming Softball Field #2 at Joaquin Murrieta Park the "Pete Moreno Softball Field #2"; Ward 6; Resolution 21441	November 17, 2009	Consent Item 7-E
Naming	Naming the Mendoza Memorial (lot at 18 Street and Convent Street) Parque de Orlando y Diego Mendoza. Ward 6; Resolution 21444	November 24, 2009	Consent Item 7-A

10. Commission Future Agenda Items and Next Meeting Date

Next meeting date is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27, 2010 at 3:30 p.m. at the Parks and Recreation Administration office, Mesquite Room, 900 S. Randolph Way.

Future agenda items: Budget Strategies/Requirements-Current and Next Fiscal Year; Field Lighting Inspections Report; Outline for Commission's Visibility and Marketing Report; Feedback on Changes in Golf Prices; Golf Maintenance Sustainable Practices

14. Adjournment

Motion (Almquist/Kovitz) to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.